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OFFICIAL

MEMORANDA OF DECISIONS

ON

POINTS OF TACTICS.

PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

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HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,

Washington, November 9, 1885.

CIRCULAR :

By direction of the Secretary of War, the following
“Memoranda of Decisions on Points of Tactics” are
published for the information and guidance of the Army.

By command of Lieut.-Gen. SHERIDAN :

R. C. DRUM,

Adjutant-General.

MEMORANDA OF DECISIONS

ON

POINTS OF TACTICS.

SCHOOL OF THE SOLDIER.

Length and cadence of step, etc.

“The following modifications of the Tactics are published for the information and government of all concerned :

“I. The length of the direct step in common and quick time will be thirty inches, measured from heel to heel ; the cadence will be at the rate of ninety steps per minute for common time and one hundred and twenty steps per minute for quick time. A natural, swinging motion of the arms will be permitted when marching.

“II. The length of the short step and back step in common and in quick time will be fifteen inches.

“III. The length of the double step will be thirty-five inches, and the cadence will be at the rate of one hundred and eighty steps per minute.

“IV. When the manual of arms is executed while marching each motion of the manual will correspond with the cadence of the step.

“V. Paragraphs of the Tactics affected by this order are modified accordingly.” [G. O. No. 54, H. Q. A., June 20, 1884.]

“The following modifications of the Tactics, to conform to the changes in the length and cadence of the step announced in General Orders No. 54, current series, from this office, are published for the information and government of all concerned :

“The length of the balance step will be fifteen inches.

“The length of the step of the pivot man on a movable pivot at common or quick time will be ten inches ; if in close column it will be fifteen inches. At double time the length of the step on the pivot will be twelve inches ; if in close column it will be eighteen inches.”

“Paragraphs of the Tactics affected by this order are modified accordingly.” [G. O. 94, H. Q. A., August 13, 1884.]

The halt, mark time, and short step executed from double time.

Although tactics are silent on this point, “the directions in paragraph 26, Infantry (27 Cav.) Tactics, applying to the halt when marching in quick time, should be conformed to as nearly as practicable in the halt from the march in double time.” [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 21, 1882.]

“The squad can be halted from double time without first coming to a quick time.

“ A squad can mark time marching at double time, and at a short step (see par. 5).

“ In the latter case the full step would be resumed at the command 1. *Forward*, 2. MARCH.

“ The short step can be used in double time (see par. 5).” [Letter A. G. O., Dec. 1, 1883.]

The touch of elbow in the wheel.

“ The touch of elbow in wheeling is toward the pivot, whether movable or fixed.” [Letter A. G. O., June 5, 1882.]

SABER EXERCISE, ETC.

Upon the question as to the proper method of executing the second motion of Left Point, Right Point, and Rear Point, Inspector-General Sacket writes as follows: “ I * * * take it for granted that the manual of the saber in his (Upton’s) tactics was taken from the Cavalry Tactics of 1841. In the latter, on page 97, it is found that in the first motion of Left Point, Right Point, and Rear Point, the edge of the blade should be upward. This is as it should be, as all points with the saber are made with a twist. In the first motion the edge of the saber is upward, and at the end of the second motion the edge is to the front or right front.

“ Plates Nos. 29, 30, and 31, in the Cavalry Tactics of 1841, show that these points are made with the edge of the saber upward.” [Indorsement of Inspector-General Sacket, July 3, 1883.]

In paragraph 102, Cavalry Tactics, the words “ thrust

to the rear" are to be construed as meaning a thrust *directly* to the rear.

The second motion of 1. *Against Infantry*, 2. *Right*, 3. PARRY (par. 121, Cavalry Tactics), is completed by extending the arm to the front, the hand the height of the head, *but at full arm's length from it*, the point of the saber to the front and upward. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

To draw saber or pistol, the trooper being armed with both.

Commanding officers of artillery and cavalry companies will, upon drills, when the men are armed with both the saber and pistol, precede the command 1. DRAW, 2 SABER, or 1. DRAW, 2. PISTOL, by the cautionary command *saber* or *pistol* according as they desire the one or the other to be drawn. [Orders No. 199, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1881.]

How to hook up the sword.

In reply to the question as to how the sword should be carried, and on what ring, General Upton says: "Paragraph 763, Infantry Tactics, prescribing that when the sword is hooked up the guard shall be to the rear, was written when the scabbard was provided with but two rings, which necessarily brought the guard to the rear. When the scabbard has three rings, and the sword is hooked up by the front or extra ring, the guard naturally comes to the front and should be so worn.

"On drill, officers 'order arms,' and 'carry arms' from an 'order;' and also hold their swords as prescribed for

the double time. They execute the other movements of the manual only when specially directed. [Letter of Lieut.-General to Lieut J. T. Thompson, Dec. 1, 1883.]

Parade rest without arms for officers.

The position of officers at parade rest without arms, or when the sword is in the scabbard, is the same as that described in paragraph 21, Infantry, and 22, Cavalry Tactics—school of the soldier. Parade rest with arms folded is specially prescribed for a commanding officer at dress parade, and for officers of the day at guard mounting. [General Upton. See *Army and Navy Journal*, October 13, 1877.]

MANUAL OF ARMS, ETC.

It would be irregular and unauthorized to divide any part of the Manual of Arms into more motions than are laid down in the Tactics. [Letter A. G. O., April 9, 1884.]

The Tactics do not provide for coming to “order arms” *by the numbers* from fix or unfix bayonets; such division of the motion is unauthorized. The Tactics in this case provide for all that is necessary. [Letter A. G. O., May 25, 1883.]

Charge bayonets.

“In paragraph 81, Infantry Tactics, the words ‘*at the same time*’ are understood, and the movement of charging bayonet is performed accordingly. The Tactics do not provide for dividing the movement into distinct motions, and it would, therefore, be irregular to introduce the proposed innovation.” [Letter A. G. O., Dec. 13, 1881.]

Secure arms.

In executing *secure arms* the toe of the piece in the first part of the first motion should turn toward the body, *i. e.*, the left. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

Safety-notch on Springfield rifle and carbine.

The *safety-notch* of the Springfield rifle and carbine now issued to troops having been introduced since the adoption of the present system of infantry tactics, all paragraphs of Upton's Infantry Tactics and the Cavalry Tactics affected thereby are modified to conform to the general rule, laid down in General Orders No. 49, of 1881, from this office, that the piece is habitually carried at the *safety-notch*.

If firing kneeling, the command 1. *Cease*, 2. FIRING, should precede the command 1. *Squad*, 2. RISE. The pieces are then brought to the safety-notch, following the general rule laid down in paragraph 106, Infantry, and 165, Cavalry Tactics, after which the squad rises and comes to a carry. [Letter A. G. O., April 4, 1883.]

G. O. Nos. 19 and 66, A. G. O., of 1884, modify paragraph 92, Infantry Tactics, the modification consisting simply in substituting for the words "the right hand at the small of the stock" (end of first motion), the words "half-cock the piece, then carry the right hand to the small of the stock."

1. *Carry*, 2. ARMS. At the command *carry*, bring the hammer to the safety-notch, and at the command *arms*, resume the carry with the right hand, at the same

time face to the front. (Two.) Drop the left hand by the side."

Oblique firings.

The following are the proper commands for the oblique firings (par. 107, Infantry, and 166, Cavalry Tactics):

The pieces being loaded and the company at carry arms, the captain commands: 1. *Fire by company*, 2. *Company*, 3. READY, 4. RIGHT (OR LEFT) OBLIQUE, 5. AIM, 6. FIRE, 7. LOAD. To continue the fire, the captain will command: 1. *Company*, 2. RIGHT (OR LEFT) OBLIQUE, 3. AIM, 4. FIRE, 5. LOAD. [Decision of the Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, Sept. 22, 1882.]

On account of the shortness of the arm and consequent danger to the front-rank men, the oblique firings will not be practiced in the double rank formation by troops armed with the Springfield carbine.

Rear rank recovering arms from the aim to left oblique.

In firing left oblique, the rear rank men bring back the left foot at the command *arms*, and not at the command *recover*. [Decision Lieut.-Gen., letter April 25, 1885—1899, A. G. O., 1885.]

Execution of the firings by the numbers.

"In drilling *by the numbers* it is correct to execute the firings and the *load* immediately after by the numbers." [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 5, 1882.]

At the command *ready* what remains unexecuted of the first motion of paragraph 94 is executed, viz: placing the

right thumb on the head of the hammer, the fingers supported against the guard and small of the stock, (Two) Cock the piece and then grasp it at the small of the stock.

Firing kneeling or lying down.

Officers should kneel or lie down unless otherwise ordered by the instructor. If the captain be the instructor, he would be at liberty to exercise his own discretion in the matter. [See paragraph 176, and also paragraph 324, Infantry Tactics; letter A. G. O., Dec. 1, 1883.]

Inspection of Arms.

I. The *safety-notch* of the rifle musket now issued to troops having been introduced since the adoption of the present system of Infantry Tactics (Upton's), so much of paragraph 72 as prescribes that the "piece is habitually carried at half-cock," is modified to read: *The piece is habitually carried at the safety-notch.*

II. Paragraph 113 is therefore modified to read:

The recruit being at order arms, bayonet fixed, to cause an inspection of arms, the instructor commands:

1. *Inspection*, 2. *ARMS.*

Commencing on the right, the instructor inspects the pieces in succession. Each recruit, as the instructor approaches him, tosses his piece quickly with the right hand opposite the left eye, catching it with the left hand between the rear sight and the lower band, the thumb extended along the stock, the barrel to the right, and inclined slightly to the front, the hand at the height of the chin; he then passes his right hand quickly to the

lock, placing the thumb on the head of the hammer, the elbow raised as high as the hand, the fingers, closed together, extending in front of the lock. (Two.) The recruit presses the thumb on the hammer, lowering the elbow at the same time, and brings the hammer to the half-cock; then drops the right hand by the side; the instructor takes the piece with his right hand at the small of the stock (the recruit dropping his left hand by the side), inspects and hands it back to the recruit, who receives it with the left hand in the position prescribed in the first motion, passes his right hand, as before, to the hammer, and the forefinger to the trigger, which he pulls, at the same time pressing the hammer downward to free it from the half-cock notch, thus bringing the hammer to the safety-notch, care being taken to release all pressure on the trigger after the hammer passes the half-cock notch; the piece is then lowered with the left hand, seized above the lower band with the right and brought to the position of *order*.

As the instructor returns the piece, the recruit next on the left throws up his piece to the position of *inspection*, and so on throughout the squad.

Should the piece be inspected without handling, the recruit brings the hammer to the safety-notch, and passing the right hand directly to the piece above the lower band, resumes the *order* as the inspector passes to the next man, who immediately tosses up his piece.

The McKeever cartridge-box.

The McKeever cartridge-box being, like the safety-notch, an invention subsequent to the publication of the

present tactics, so much of paragraph 115, Infantry, and 174, Cavalry Tactics, as requires the flap to be held against the body is inapplicable, and, therefore, to be omitted. For infantry, the following method, proposed by Captain Morris, Fifth Artillery, has been adopted ;

“ *To open the box* :—Steady the piece with the left hand, opening the box with the right. Drop the right hand to the side (without regrasping the piece, but still steadying it with the left hand.)

“ *To close the box* : Close the box with the right hand. Regrasp the piece with the right hand, dropping the left hand by the side.” [Letters A. G. O., Jan. 27, Nov. 22 and Dec. 20, 1882.]

The position of the box is behind the hip.

Stacking arms.

The following manual (prepared by Lieutenant *W. C. Brown*, 1st Cavalry, and recommended by a board of officers at the Infantry and Cavalry School at Fort Leavenworth) is approved, and will be used for all arms provided with the *stacking swivel* :

The men being at *order arms*, bayonets unfixed, the instructor commands :

1. STACK, 2. ARMS.

At the command *stack*, each even number of the front rank turns his piece, barrel to the front (the barrel turning to the left,) and inclines it slightly forward, grasping it with the left hand at the upper band, the thumb and fore-finger raising the hook-swivel ; each even number of the rear rank then passess his piece to his file leader, who

grasps it between the bands with his right hand and throws it, barrel to the rear, two feet in front of his own piece, the right hand slipping to the upper hand, the thumb and fore-finger raising the hook-swivel, which he engages with that of his own piece, and inclines both to the right. Each odd number of the front rank grasps his piece with the right hand between the bands, the left hand guiding the hook-swivel, which he holds near the hook-swivels of the other pieces.

At the command *arms*, each odd number of the front rank engages the hook of his piece with the free hook of the piece of the even number of the rear rank. He then turns the barrel downward and to the right between the other two—so that it shall rest upon their intersection—and rests the butt about fifteen inches in front of his right foot.

The stack being formed and aligned, the command *lay on loose pieces* is given, at which the remaining pieces in the rear rank are passed to the even numbers in the front rank, who lay them on the stacks. The pieces of the file-closers are laid on the stack at the same time.

To resume arms.

The instructor commands :

1. *Squad*, 2. ATTENTION, 3. TAKE, 4. ARMS.

At the second command the men resume their places in rear of the stacks and come to attention. At the command *take*, the pieces of the odd-numbered men of the rear rank and of the file-closers are passed to them ; each even number of the front rank then grasps his own piece

with the left hand, the piece of his rear-rank man with the right hand, grasping both between the bands; each odd number of the front rank grasps his own piece in the same way with the right hand. At the command *arms*, each even number of the front rank turns his piece to the left, disengages it from the piece of his rear-rank man, which he returns to him; each odd number of the front rank at the same time disengages his own piece by turning it to the right; all resuming the order *arms*.

If in single rank, number two of each four makes the stack, using the piece of number three as explained for the even-numbered rear rank man; number one using his own piece as explained for the odd-numbered front-rank man, and the loose pieces are passed and laid on as before. In breaking the stack the loose pieces are passed as before, and the stack is broken as when in two ranks, number two taking his own piece in his right hand and that of number three in his left, which he passes to him on breaking the stack. Number one grasps his own piece with his right hand. (G. O. 2, A. G. O., 1883.) If ranks have not been broken, or the squad not brought to a "rest" or in "place rest" after the formation of the stacks, the first and second commands will be omitted.

G. O. No. 2, A. G. O., 1883, is not intended to do away with stacking arms *with* the bayonet fixed. [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 10, 1883.]

In stacking arms "the pieces of the *guides* are laid on the stack at the command 'lay on loose pieces.' The expression 'file-closers' as used in paragraph 116 includes guides." [Letter A. G. O., Oct 5, 1882.]

If the commanding officer desires the bayonet to be used, he should give the command "Stack arms" *when the bayonets are fixed*; but if he desires to use the stacking swivel, he should give the command when the *bayonets are unfixed*. The stacking swivel should, however, be habitually used. [Letter A. G. O., August 2, 1884.]

Resuming carry from parade rest with carbine.

In resuming the *carry* from parade rest with the carbine, the left hand is carried to the height of the shoulder before being dropped by the side, following the first general rule on page 47, Cavalry Tactics. [Decision of the Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School.]

To execute the carry upon halting, etc.

(Par. 119, Infantry, and 176, Cavalry Tactics.)

The men should halt and bring their pieces to a carry immediately after the foot in rear is brought to the side of the foot in front. If a squad or company be halted while marching at an oblique the men halt, come to a carry, and then face to the front. [Letter A. G. O., Nov. 30, 1883.]

The following questions bearing upon the interpretation of paragraph 119, Infantry Tactics, were decided by the General of the Army as follows:

Question.—When part of a command is required to take *double time*, by which the bringing of the pieces to *right shoulder* is necessitated, should the entire organiza-

tion bring the pieces to the *right shoulder*? Also, if part of an organization has brought pieces to right shoulder in order to execute *double time*, should it again bring them to *carry arms* after its execution, if the other portion has them in that position?

Answer.—The rule upon these points is, *First*: When a maneuver requires the several subdivisions of a command to successively take double time, each in its turn comes to right shoulder arms, until finally the entire command is at right shoulder, and conversely. When the entire command is marching at double time, and consequently with arms at right shoulder, and a maneuver requires the subdivisions to come successively to a halt, each in its turn comes to carry arms. *Second*: When a command is marching at carry arms and a subdivision of it is required to take double time for a specific purpose and for a limited period, this portion alone comes to right shoulder arms, and when it resumes quick time, again comes to carry arms.

Question.—Are pieces brought to a carry when halting, if the command *halt* is not given?

Answer.—The Tactics (paragraph 119) in prescribing so emphatically that, whenever the command halt is given, the men bring their pieces to the carry upon executing the command, precludes the supposition that arms are brought to a carry when the command halt is *not* given. [Letter of General Sherman to C. O., U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, March 26, 1883. See also decision of Gen. Upton in *Army and Navy Journal*, Oct. 23, 1875.]

When a company is marching in line, at quick time and at a carry, with one or more sets of fours broken to the rear, and the command is given, “Rear fours, right (or left) front into line, double time, march,” the rear fours only come to a *right shoulder*, and each set of fours come to a *carry* as soon as it arrives on the line.

When a company is marching in column of fours at quick time, arms at a *carry*, and the command is given, “*Right (or left) front into line, double time, march,*” all the company come to *right shoulder*, but the leading four do not raise the left hand, the rear fours drop the left hand as soon as they arrive on the line and resume the quick time. [Decision of Lieut.-General, Dec. 12, 1884.]

The following decisions relating to the interpretation of paragraph 119 were made by General Upton:

Question.—Paragraph 119 (Infantry Tactics). When the command “*Halt*” is given pieces are brought to a carry. I understand, therefore, that if a company is at a right shoulder in paragraph 233 (when marching) and paragraph 238, as no command “*Halt*” is given, the ranks of four, coming to a halt should not carry arms. Am I right?

Answer.—Yes.

Paragraphs 245 to 249, same question, companies: should not carry until company commander commands, “*Fours left (or right), march.*” “*Company halt.*”

Answer.—Right.

Question.—Paragraphs 250 and 542. Suppose men at a carry or support, and the command is given “*Double-rank distance, double time,*” should not the leading four

come to a right shoulder, and raise the left forearm to a horizontal position, or if the pieces are already at a right shoulder, should the left forearm be raised?

Answer.—Pieces should be brought to a right shoulder, but as leading rank does not take double time the left hand should not be raised. Paragraph 119 does not require hand to be raised except by those who take double time.

To draw cartridge (mounted).

In the Manual of the Carbine mounted (pars. 450–462, Cavalry Tactics), no means being prescribed for removing the cartridge, the following manual has been approved by the Commanding Officer of the U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School as being proper and in accordance with the spirit of tactics:

“The piece being at *advance carbine* and loaded, to draw the cartridge the instructor commands: 1. *Draw*, 2. CARTRIDGE. At which the piece is brought to the position of the first motion of *load*; the chamber is then opened, the cartridge withdrawn and returned to the cartridge-box, after which the chamber is closed and the piece brought to the position of *advance carbine*.” [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

SCHOOL OF THE PLATOON (MOUNTED).

On the right or left into line at a trot or gallop.

The Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School has expressed opinion upon this question as follows:

Question.—Paragraph 510, Cavalry Tactics. Can the column of fours be formed *on* the right or left into line

at a trot or gallop, and, if so, should not the platoon be always halted?

Answer.—Yes. In my opinion the movement is in accord with the spirit of the Tactics, and paragraph 5 confirms that opinion. Platoon should be halted. [Circular 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

SCHOOL OF THE COMPANY.

Troop or company.

“The legal designation (Sections 1102 and 1103, R. S.) is troop.” [Letter A. G. O., Jan. 18, 1882.]

The designation “troop,” instead of “company,” should be used by cavalry organizations. [Letter to Commanding General, Division of the Pacific, August 7, 1883.]

Upon the question asking whether the word “troop” should be substituted for “company” whenever the latter occurs in the Cavalry Tactics, the General of the Army says the change should *not* be made.

The provisions of paragraph 166 of the regulations will be regarded as applicable to the Tactics. [Letter A. G. O., May 15, 1882.]

Troop, battery, or company.

At battalion or company drills, or dress parades with a *mixed* command, or when either cavalry, artillery or infantry are drilling as *infantry*, the word “company” should be used; if as *artillery*, the word “battery.” [Letter to Commanding General, Department of Arizona, Sept. 14, 1883.]

First sergeant—returning to post after formation of company.

Upon the question as to whether, after the first sergeant has formed the company, called the roll, and saluted, he should return to his post or wait for a command to do so, the General of the Army, says:

“The Tactics do not provide for any command whatever. The first sergeant therefore takes his place on the right of the company without any command. This is the universal rule as practiced in the regular army.” [A. G. O., Feb. 8, 1882.]

Position of first sergeant when dismissing company.

It is more convenient, and the more general custom in the service, for the first sergeant to step two paces to the front and face to the left to give the command for dismissal. [Letter A. G. O., October 18, 1884.]

Arms carried by a first sergeant of cavalry.

The first sergeant of a troop of cavalry (armed with a carbine and serving as infantry) should carry a carbine. [Letter A. G. O., August 1, 1884.]

Position of file-closers at formation of company.

The file-closers should fall in, facing in the same direction as the men in ranks. (Decision of Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School.)

Interpretation of words “subdivision in column.”

“The words ‘subdivision in column’ were not intended to refer to a column of fours. Fours are not spoken of

as a subdivision. In a column of fours the sergeants should carry their arms the same as the men." [Letter A. G. O., Nov. 20, 1877.]

Execution of manual of arms by guides and file-closers.

It is not in conformity with Upton's Tactics for guides and file-closers to execute any of the manual of arms from "arms port," except that of "carry arms," and the position of arms port can only be taken from a carry (see last clause of pars. 85 and 87, Infantry Tactics). [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 5, 1882.]

The guide of a company, drilling singly, when marching in line should hold his musket habitually at a carry. [Letter from Adjutant General to Editor *Army and Navy Journal*, Feb. 14, 1884.]

Guides and file-closers execute parade rest on dress parade at the command of their captains given before the band sounds off. [Letter A. G. O., July 3, 1883.]

It is incorrect for guides and file-closers to execute "arms port" on breaking ranks of company. [Decision of General Upton.]

In determining the question as to what guides, under par. 189, are exempt from the "carry arms," when marching in common or quick time, it is to be noted that both right and left guides of a company or division are not simultaneously charged with the step and direction of march. These guides, either right or left, who are not so charged are exempt. The word "guide," as used in the Tactics, has two meanings. It may mean any sergeant placed on the flanks of a company in line, or its front and rear in a column or fours, twos, or files; and

denominated right or left, and leading and rear guides. (See pars. 180, 214, 382, 436, etc.) In a more restricted sense it may mean that particular one of these sergeants who, for the time being, is charged with the step, etc. In par. 189 it is used in the general sense in the plural and in the restricted sense in the singular. [Letter A. G. O., April 7, 1884.]

Dismissing a squad in column of fours.

There is no tactical authority for dismissing a squad in column of fours. It is a custom of service at some posts to do so. [Letter A. G. O., Dec. 1, 1883.]

Fours in circle right (or left) wheel.

It is not positively *incorrect* to give the command 1. *Fours in circle right (or left) wheel*, MARCH, from any position; but it is better to commence the movement from line. The movement must always be finished in line as prescribed in par. 212, Infantry Tactics.

As the foregoing exercise is simply for the purpose of perfecting the company in wheeling by fours, and not for any tactical maneuver, the file-closers do not follow the fours around, but remain in their respective positions, and at the conclusion of the exercise take their proper places, if not already there. [Letters A. G. O., October 5, 1882, and July 3, 1883.]

The about by twos, from column of twos,

is not a proper movement. [Decision of the General of the Army.]

The formation of column of twos to the front from line not authorized.

The following question was decided by the Lieutenant-General commanding the Army as follows :

Question.—A company being in line, can it be marched in column of twos to the front by the commands 1. *Right* (or) *left forward*, 2. *Twos right* (or) *left*, 3. *MARCH*?

Answer.—The movement is practicable, but not authorized. It was prescribed in the first edition of Upton's Tactics, paragraph 600, page 91, and was omitted in the edition now authorized. When the movement is desirable, it can be accomplished by forming column of twos to the right and then changing direction to the left, by the commands and means laid down in the Tactics. [Letter A. G. O., Feb. 11, 1884.]

Distance between ranks in column of twos, and march of column of twos.

Upon questions submitted, the General of the Army decided as follows :

Question.—Is the distance between ranks in column of twos, when broken from column of fours, double rank formation, the same as when broken from column of fours in single-rank formation?

Answer.—In the first case the distance is ten inches ; in the second, thirty-two inches.

Question.—Can the march of twos be in double time?

Answer.—The Tactics provide for no such movement. On the contrary, paragraph 236 (Infantry) specifically says : “ The march in column of twos (or files) is always

in quick time." This applies to column of twos formed from column of fours in double-rank formation. Paragraph 42 as well as many others indicate that whenever files have a distance of 32 inches, they can be marched in double time. A column of twos formed from single rank has this distance, and can therefore be thus marched. A column of files can, if *necessary*, be marched in double time by increasing the distance to thirty-two inches (paragraph 42). No specific command is, however, laid down for taking this distance. The movement is only a casual one at best, is employed mostly for the marching of squads or detachments for police and such like purposes, and when it is necessary to take double time the files take the increased distance without any formal commands. In case of an emergency, a column of twos could take distance in the same manner. [Letter to Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, March 26, 1883.]

A column of fours, twos, or files may be marched a short distance to the rear, or to a flank, but no maneuvers should be executed until the column is again faced to the original front. The officers and non-commissioned officers face with the column and retain their positions.

Formation of column of fours, on the right or left, into line at double time.

"The entire company takes the double time at the command '*in double rank on left into line, double time march,*' when marching in column of fours, in single rank, and this accords with paragraphs 252 and 225 when considered

in connection with paragraph 5 of the Tactics." [Letter A. G. O., January 16, 1885.]

Cautionary commands by chiefs of platoons.

Chiefs of platoons preface their commands with "*First*" or "*Second*," only when specially prescribed. [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 5, 1882.]

Skirmishers.

The Lieutenant-General commanding the Army decides that all deployments as skirmishers should always be made on number four, both in single and double rank, whether intervals be taken on the right, left, or center four. [Letter to Commanding General, Department of the Missouri, April 1, 1885.]

Marching to the rear, the right and left skirmishers retain their designations.

To rally by fours.

To "rally by fours" when in single rank, number three places himself on the right of number four, number two on the right of number three, and number one between numbers two and four; thus forming a circle of numbers, four, three two, one, from right to rear. [Letter A. G. O., Nov. 10, 1883.]

Opening fire after the rally.

Question.—Paragraphs 326 and 327, Infantry Tactics. In the rally by fours and by company, do the men open fire at once, or do they wait for the command *commence firing*?

Answer.—At drill the command for firing should be given, unless the line is firing when the rally is ordered, in which case the firing should be continued without command as soon as the rally is made.

Order of companies at battalion skirmish drill after reserve has been taken out, etc.

Companies on the skirmish line should not retain their battalion designation, but should be numbered from right to left. Bayonets should be fixed at the command, "Rally by divisions," as the movement is prescribed for a battalion threatened by cavalry. In the "Rally on the battalion," bayonets should not be fixed by the skirmishers, unless the colonel orders his battalion to fix bayonets before ordering the "rally." [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 18, 1884.]

Deployment of a cavalry battalion in column of fours to fight on foot, to the front, part to the right and part to the left.

Answer was made to question submitted to General Sherman, as follows :

Question.—Can a Cavalry battalion in column of fours, dismounting to fight on foot, be deployed as skirmishers to the front, part of the battalion to the right and part to the left ; and if so, by what commands and means ?

Answer.—"The Tactics, paragraph 688, says this maneuver *may* be executed ; the meaning of which is, that, though allowable, it is not advisable. No form of command is prescribed for simultaneously dismounting to the right and left. It is therefore better to make two distinct

movements, rather than extemporize a command that may either be misunderstood or give rise to cavil or discussion. The commands, although given separately and in strict conformity with the words of the Tactics, may follow in such quick succession as to make the movement quite simultaneous.

“The maneuver, whether to the right or left, or both, is to provide against cases where a command is confined to a narrow way, and an emergency arises when it is desirable to deploy as skirmishers, leaving the horses still in the narrow way. The method of doing this, prescribed in Tactics, recognizes inversions of subdivisions—an exception to general rules warranted by the conditions under which the movement is required.” [Letter to the Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, March 26, 1883.]

SCHOOL OF THE BATTALION.

Order of companies in formation of a battalion of infantry, etc.

When the battalion consists of three companies the captain third in rank commands the right center, or color company, this being the second company in the battalion. [General Upton.]

When the battalion consists of five companies, the General of the Army has at different times decided in substance as follows: The (Infantry) Tactics, paragraph 365, prescribe that the third captain has the right center, or color company. This is an invariable rule. When the number of companies is uneven, as in a case cited,

the same paragraph prescribes that the fourth captain commands the second company from the left, and not, as * * * has it, the third from the left. Besides the unmistakable plainness of the table on page 150 of the Tactics, it so happens in this instance, there being five companies, the position of each is specifically pointed out in the text.

It will be observed that the table and text entirely agree.

A different arrangement may possibly be better than that laid down in the Tactics, and it is well known that the propriety of the formation laid down in the Tactics is questioned, but until an authorized change is made they must be explicitly followed. [Letters A. G. O., October 5, 1882.]

Construction of the first five lines, top of page 151, Infantry Tactics.

In the absence of a captain for a few days only, his company must retain its old place in the line, unless otherwise ordered by the commanding officer.

Question.—When a battalion is composed of fractions of regiments are these fractions arranged in line according to the rank of captains actually with companies, field officers present at the post, or according to the rank of the officer actually in command on the ground?

Answer.—“According to the rank of the senior officer present in each” fraction. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

When a single battalion is made up of fractions of two

or more regiments, there is no interval between the companies, and they are arranged as prescribed in the last clause of paragraph 365, page 152, Infantry Tactics. [Letter A. G. O., September 10. 1884.]

General rules for successive formations.

Paragraph 378, Infantry Tactics, describes a successive formation on the center, and therefore says: "The flank companies *support arms* as soon as dressed."

In all successive formations on a flank, the company on which the formation is made will not be brought to the support until the command "front" by the captain of the next company.

In forming line by two movements, the companies which form to the right or left are brought to *support* as soon as dressed; except the one farthest from the point of rest, which remains at the *carry* until the command "*front*" by the captain of the company coming first into line by the second movement.

In forming line by two movements from column of fours, the guides of that portion of the column which forms to the right or left *do not come on the line*. [The above decisions on "general rules for successive formation" were rendered by General Upton in answer to questions submitted by Colonel R. I. Dodge, U. S. A.]

In the formation of the battalion (pages 157-158, Infantry Tactics), the captain of the right center company should bring his company to a "*support*" as soon as the captains of the companies next to him in his own and left wing give the command "front."

The junior captain gives the command *support arms* from his position in the rear rank. [Letter A. G. O., July 14, 1882.]

The *general alignment* prescribed in paragraph 405, Infantry Tactics, is not a successive formation; therefore guides should not invert pieces, nor company commanders order "*support arms.*" [Decision of General Upton]

The following question, submitted to Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, was by him decided as follows:

Question.—Paragraph 421, Infantry Tactics. In forming the column of fours, left in front, on the right or left into line, the colonel desiring to commence firing by company, would it be a violation of the provisions of paragraph 388 for the fire to be commenced by the first company on the line?

Answer.—No. It would probably be necessary in a case of this kind to take up the firing immediately and by company as soon as the guides retire. Paragraph 421 makes a special exception, and states that the fire shall begin with the company first on the line.

The guides of companies that have changed direction in forming line from column of companies at full distance by two movements do not invert their pieces.

The guides of the right companies of a double column do not invert their pieces in forming line to the right. The general rule laid down in paragraph 374 of the Tactics obtains only for those companies that execute the movement successively.

Posts of officers, etc., in the march to the rear, the battalion having previously advanced by the flank of subdivisions.

The interpretation of the words "march as in the advance," in the last line of paragraph 461, of the Tactics, is that the field officers, adjutant, sergeant-major, staff, and band remain in their relative positions, the staff in front of the band, the band in front of the center subdivision, the adjutant and sergeant-major being abreast with the heads of subdivisions, etc.

This conforms to the rules laid down in paragraph 507, for the march to the rear of a double column of companies.

Battalion advancing by right or left of wings, to reform line.

It is not contemplated in the Tactics that the wings of a battalion of infantry should execute "right front into line," so as to bring the colors on the right of the battalion, and the movement should not be executed. [Letter A. G. O., Nov. 19, 1884.]

Ployment on an interior company or division for infantry.

Question.—In paragraph 780, Cavalry Tactics, commands and means are laid down for the ployment on an interior company, but a reference to the Infantry Tactics shows that this movement, which would seem to be quite as important for infantry as cavalry, is not provided for.

Would it be proper to ploy on an interior company or division in infantry by the commands and means prescribed for cavalry?

Answer.—There can be no objection to it. Ployments were formerly made on an interior division of an infantry line. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

General guides.

Now that flags are to be carried by the general guides, under the provisions of paragraph 2792½ of the Regulations (General Orders No. 61, of 1885, from this office), the practice of inverting the piece in the deployment of close column, as set forth in the last two lines of paragraph 498, page 217, Infantry Tactics, will be discontinued. [Decision Lieut.-Gen., letter June 24, 1885—3391, A. G. O., 1885.]

Passing file-closers from one flank to the other in School of Battalion Mounted.

Question.—In Infantry Tactics, paragraphs 214 and 415, also in Cavalry Tactics, school of company and battalion dismounted, paragraphs 228 and 326, provision is made for changing a column of fours from *right in front* to *left in front*, and the reverse, by passing the file-closers from one flank to the other.

Is it not proper, and in accordance with the spirit of tactics, to do this mounted by the same commands and means as when dismounted; if not; why not?

Answer.—Dismounted, file-closers can pass readily between sets of fours, but mounted they cannot. The latter could pass around the head and rear of their respective companies, and the movement might be introduced with advantage. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884]

Cavalry Tactics, par. 792. Position of troop commander in the march of the close column by the flank.

On cavalry battalion drill in close column of companies, right in front, at the command "Fours right, Guide right," the troop commanders remain on the left, and No. 4 is the guide of the leading four. In the march by the flank, of a battalion in close column of companies, the company column on that flank on which the guide is announced is the directing column, and its march is regulated by its guide, either on the right or on the left, according as the column is right or left in front.

In regard to paragraphs 543 and 582 of the Tactics, the announcement of the guide in case of a company in column of platoons, marching by the flank, fixes the position of the troop commander, just as in the march by the flank of a battalion in close column of companies it fixes the position of the major. It is not contemplated in the Tactics that the platoons in the first case, or the companies in the second, should be changed from right to left in front by the mere announcement of the guide. [Letter to Commanding General Department of the Missouri, May 2, 1885.]

Error in paragraph 818, Cavalry Tactics.

"The typographical error in the last clause of paragraph 818, Cavalry Tactics, consists in using the word 'toward' instead of the word 'opposite.'" [Letter to Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, March 26, 1883.]

Double column of fours (cavalry) when right and when left in front.

Provision is made in paragraph 868, Cavalry Tactics, for ploying the double column of fours into column in double rank at closed distance; but no reference being made as to when a column of fours is to be considered right and when left in front, a simple and practical rule, announced by Major S. B. M. Young, 3d Cavalry, commanding cavalry battalion at the U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, has been adopted at the school.

Rule: "A double column of fours is right in front when the file-closers are at the rear of the column, and left in front when they are at the head of the column."

This rule works well in executing the movement above referred to. A company column right in front, after entering the battalion column, wheels by fours to the left, and when left in front, by fours to the right. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

Designation of companies in echelon.

As to whether the numerical designation of companies change the *order of echelon*, the General of the Army says:

"Echelon formation is one partaking more of the nature of a line than of a column, for the reason that all parts of it can deliver its fire to the front—a thing that cannot be done in a column, strictly speaking.

"For all tactical purposes it is a line having its front in the direction in which the subdivisions face.

"The companies are designated numerically from

right to left in the same manner as though the line were unbroken, and this, too, independent of whether the first is the most advanced or most retired company." [Letter to Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, March 26, 1883.]

SALUTES, HONORS TO BE PAID BY TROOPS, ETC.

No salutes at inspection of quarters.

Soldiers do not salute at the inspection of quarters prescribed in Infantry Tactics, page 360 (Cavalry Tactics, top of page 436), nor do they salute on the occasions contemplated in paragraph 803, Infantry (1121, Cavalry) Tactics. In both cases they simply remain standing at attention. [Letters A. G. O., March 13, 1882.]

Salutes by enlisted men.

The Regulations require an enlisted man to salute, under *all* circumstances when meeting an officer, excepting when indoor and unarmed; in such case he uncovers and stands at attention, as provided in paragraph 605 of the Regulations. [Letter Nov. 16, 1883—4770, A. G. O., 1883.]

Salutes in situations where they cannot be returned.

Question.—Should an enlisted man passing an officer, who is standing at *parade rest* in front of his company at retreat, salute, it being manifestly improper for the officer to return the salute under such circumstances?

Answer.—Yes. [Decision of the Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, Sept. 22, 1882.]

Order of march for a marching salute.

In regard to the order of march for rendering a marching salute General Upton says: "This is not prescribed, but if done, the general could give any order to his troops, as first, Cavalry; second, Artillery; third, Infantry. But for a regular review, the troops should pass first, Infantry; second, Artillery; third, Cavalry." (See paragraph 833, Infantry Tactics.)

Commanders of subdivisions render salutes only when specially directed.

Question.—In case of a battalion marching past a general officer, I take it that pieces should be brought to a carry and the colonel only salute. How about a larger command? Commanding officer should salute, should the colonel salute?

Answer.—No rules are prescribed except for review, but paragraph 792 should apply and only commanding officer salutes. [General Upton.]

CEREMONIES.

When a company is inspected on company parade (not preceded by a review), the company does not present arms. The inspector is saluted by the company commander only, the company being at a carry. The officer, if he desires to inspect simply, acknowledges the salute, and then says: *Prepare your company for inspection.* If he desires to muster the company in addition, he says: *Prepare your company for inspection and muster.* The captain then faces about, causes the company to carry

arms, and opens ranks as in paragraph 183, Infantry (194 Cavalry) Tactics.

The inspection is conducted on the principles prescribed—pages 358–59–60, Infantry Tactics.

If muster follows the inspection, the command *attention to muster* is given as soon as the inspection is finished.

*Post of captain at inspection when giving command,
“ Open boxes.”*

At inspection, the post of the captain, in giving the command 1. *Open*, 2. *BOXES*, is three yards in front of the right file of the company and facing to the left. [Decision of the Commanding Officer U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, September 22, 1882.]

Post of staff officers at dress parade.

“ In the formation of a battalion for parade, the colonel takes his place in front unaccompanied by the regimental staff. The latter take positions on the right of the adjutant (whose place is as specified in the second paragraph of page 154, Infantry Tactics), placing themselves, according to rank, at one yard apart, and one yard from the adjutant; the non-commissioned staff take post as explained in the second clause from the last of paragraph 368.

“ These positions are taken as the battalion is formed. At the command * * * ‘ *Rear open order, march,*’ the staff officers step forward and dress up on the line of company officers; the non-commissioned staff—the sergeant-major on the right—form in a similar manner on the left of the battalion, dressing on the front rank.

“ At the command ‘*Parade is dismissed,*’ the officers, including those of the staff, close in to the center, as explained on page 350.

“ In doing this the field officers, after returning sword, face toward the battalion, march until on the line of company officers, face to the center, and close in with the other officers, following in the rear of the last officer on each flank.

“ The remainder of the ceremony is as explained on pages 350 and 351.” [Letter A. G. O., Dec. 29, 1882.]

Post of officers of the general staff at street parade.

In regard to this question the Lieutenant-General commanding the Army decides as follows :

“ Street parades are not prescribed in Tactics or Regulations), and no rules are laid down for them. They are, however, established by custom.

“ On account of the width of the ordinary streets, the position for the staff prescribed in paragraph 368, page 154 (Infantry Tactics), is impossible ; and as the occasion is a ceremonial one the position prescribed in paragraph 459 is inapplicable.

“ The opinion expressed by General Hancock is correct, and the staff in this case should march as in review—paragraph 815, page 355.” [Letter to Commanding General, Department of the East, August 2, 1884.]

Color bearer.

At dress parade of a regiment, while the battalion is standing at a “ parade rest,” it is the practice for the color bearer to remove the staff from the socket and rest

the end upon the ground. At an "order arms" and "parade rest" the color bearer takes position with the staff, nearly as practicable, the same as the soldier does with his rifle. [Letter A. G. O., March 10, 1885.]

Dress parade for the three arms combined not allowable.

Question.—I take it that a brigade dress parade of the three arms is not intended; if it is allowable, however, would not paragraph 833 govern in the formation?

Answer —No dress parade is prescribed for the three arms united and ought not to be. [Decision of Gen. Upton.]

Dress parade for brigade of infantry.

Question.—In formation for brigade dress parade (line of masses), if battalions are brought to "place rest" should colonels command "*Guides posts?*" See page 252, last paragraph. Taking paragraph 637 in connection, it seems to me the adjutant-general should give the command. Am I right?

Answer.—If the formation for dress parade is in line of masses the adjutant-general should command "*Guides posts,*" then "*Battalions attention,*" but bear in mind that by last paragraph, page 252, it remains optional with the general whether the battalions in their first formation are permitted to come to "place rest." [Decision of Gen. Upton.]

The commanding officers at review who do not return swords on taking post on right of reviewing officer.

Generals of brigade and their staff, and colonels commanding battalions, do not return swords when they take

place on right of reviewing officer after leaving the column.

The form "of dress parade" prescribed by the Tactics is applicable to a mixed battalion of different arms of the service dismounted.

Equalizing companies before review.

"A battalion being in line may be equalized before review as prescribed in paragraph 382, Upton's Infantry Tactics. In this case, if there is an inspection after the review, the colonel should, before wheeling into column, notify the captains to reform their companies. The captains should then cause their first sergeants, or right guides, to take their places on the right of their permanent companies, so that in column for inspection or muster each permanent company would be by itself." [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 1, 1883.]

Place of staff officers at review, etc.

"Inasmuch as the Tactics and Regulations are silent on the subject, we must refer to the usages of service. The officers of the general staff, serving at military posts, do not belong to regiments or battalions, but constitute the staff of the commanding officer. They will attend him on all reviews and inspections, will form in line three paces to the rear of the commanding officer, who may at his discretion require them to stand fast when he proceeds to make the 'inspection,' or he may instruct one or more to accompany him and the remainder to retain their position at the *post for review*.

"But with non commissioned officers no distinction is

made as to whether they are regimental or of the general staff—all taking post as prescribed in Tactics. Acting rank confers no position prejudicial to actual rank.” [Letter A. G. O., May 31, 1881.]

Post of troop commanders when passing in review.

Cavalry troops are marched in review in column of either companies or platoons; differing in this respect from infantry, in which the line is broken only into column of companies. When in column of companies the captain is in front of the center of his company (troop), as prescribed in paragraph 534, Cavalry Tactics; and when in column of platoons the captain is, as prescribed in paragraph 565, abreast of the leading platoon, *on the side of the guide* four yards from the flank, and there is no exception to this. [Letter A. G. O., Dec. 20, 1882.]

Proper time for commanding officer to return sword at review of a battalion.

Question.—When should the commanding officer, at review of a battalion, return his sword, and when should he draw it after he has accompanied the reviewing officer in inspecting the battalion before marching in review?

Answer.—All things being in readiness for the review, the reviewing officer advances a few paces toward the colonel, and halts when the colonel faces about and commands “present arms,” faces to the front and salutes. The reviewing officer acknowledges the salute, etc., after which the colonel faces about and commands “carry arms,” and faces again to the front. * * *
He will *then return his sword* and join the reviewing of-

ficer, who has started for the right of the line. When about joining the reviewing officer the colonel will salute by touching his hat, and will take his place on the right of the reviewing officer and accompany him around the battalion. On reaching the right of the line, the colonel will pass to the rear and take his place on the left of the reviewing officer. After accompanying him some fifteen or twenty paces, he will salute by touching his hat, and move direct to his post in front of the center of the battalion, face it, *draw sword*, and command "close order, march." [Letter to editor *Army and Navy Journal*, Jan. 16, 1885.]

Reviewing officer passing around battalion at review.

It is entirely optional whether the reviewing officer passes between the band or drum corps and the right of the regiment at review or not. When mounted, he will pass to the right of the band. [Decision of Gen. Upton. See *Army and Navy Journal*, May 3, 1873.]

Post of captain mounted at command "rear open order."

(Paragraph 1154, Cavalry Tactics)

The Tactics are indefinite. The following rule would seem pertinent: At the command *rear open order*, the captain places himself nine yards to the front of the right file, facing to the left so as to be in proper position to superintend the alignment of officers. At the command *march*, the captain proceeds as in company formation. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

Instructions for lieutenants at inspection.

At inspection of infantry or cavalry dismounted, at the approach of the inspector, lieutenants of infantry will bring their swords to a carry at the command "*inspection arms*," and lieutenants of cavalry will bring their sabers to a carry at the command "*Carry arms*."

* * * * *

Upon the completion of the inspector's examination of the ammunition and boxes all lieutenants will come to an attention and carry, face about, and lieutenants of infantry will again, immediately thereafter, drop their swords to the front, but lieutenants of cavalry will remain at a carry. [Orders No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1882.]

Manual for inspection of blanket bags (prepared by Capt. Evan Miles, Twenty-First Infantry.)

The following manual for the inspection of blanket bags—which may be used in place of that prescribed for the inspection of knapsacks, in paragraph 816, page 359 (except the first six lines), and the first three lines of page 360, of Upton Infantry Tactics—is published for the information and government of all concerned.

The captain then closes ranks, stacks arms, opens ranks, and commands :

1. *Front Rank*, 2. ABOUT, 3. FACE, 4. UNSLING, 5. BLANKET BAGS, 6. *Open*, 7. BLANKET BAGS.

The men of the front rank, having faced about, take a short step forward so as to be free from the stacks.

At the command "*unsling*," each man makes a half face to the right and unfastens the hook of the right strap by seizing the D ring with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, passed under the blanket bag; he then unhooks the strap with the right hand, and unslings the blanket bag by passing the right forearm over the head; at the same time he faces to the front, and, standing erect, holds it by the straps in front of the knees. At the command "*blanket bags*," he places the blanket bag on the ground against the toes, the straps underneath, the greatcoat outward, and then stands at attention; at the seventh command he opens the blanket bag, turning the flap from him, the flap resting on the greatcoat; he then stands at attention.

The inspector having inspected the blanket bags, the captain commands:

1. *Repack*, 2. BLANKET BAGS.

At the command "*blanket bags*," each soldier repacks and fastens up his blanket bag, leaving it in the same position as before opening it, and then stands at attention. The captain then commands:

1. SLING. 2. BLANKET BAGS.

At the command "*sling*," each man grasps the unhooked (right) strap with the right hand, the hooked left strap with the left hand, the back of the left hand to the right, raises the blanket bag, and, standing erect, makes a half face to the right.

At the command "*blanket bags*," he swings the blanket bag over the shoulders, passing the left arm through the

hooked strap, and carrying the right-hand strap over the head. He then brings this strap down over the right shoulder, makes a half face to the left, and hooks the strap with the right hand, holding the D ring with the thumb and forefinger of the left hand passed under the blanket bag. Each man then stands at attention. [G. O. 13, H. Q. A., Feb. 10, 1885.]

Review of a division.

The following questions submitted to the General of the Army were by him answered as follows:

First Question.—A division is formed in line of masses, that is, each regiment shows division front. Does the reviewing officer ride around each brigade by itself, or does he ride down the entire division front and back in its rear? Upton says he rides as prescribed for division in line of battle.

Answer.—The reviewing officer, in reviewing a division in line of masses, rides to the extreme left before passing in rear of any of the brigades. (See sixth paragraph, page 391, and fifth paragraph, page 389, Upton's Tactics.)

Second Question.—Does a major-general commanding three brigades draw a sword and salute the reviewing officer while his command stands in line of battle or in masses?

Answer.—The division commander does not salute when a division is in line or in line of masses. The salute of a division is given by brigade. (See last paragraph on page 388, and following.)

Third Question.—While troops are marching in review

with the general at the head, where does the assistant adjutant-general ride ; at his side, or six paces in rear ?

Answer.—The adjutant-general is a part of the staff, and as a member thereof rides six yards in rear of the general. (See fifth paragraph, page 386 ; also third paragraph, page 390.)

Fourth Question.—While a brigadier-general rides down the front of his line with the major-general and reviewing officer, does he have his sword drawn or in the scabbard ?

Answer.—Brigade commanders do not accompany the reviewing officer in the review of a division. They are supposed to have their swords drawn at all times. Corps and division commanders have their swords in the scabbard, except on approaching the reviewing officer marching in review. (See page 384, third paragraph.)

Fifth Question.—While a brigade commander is at the right of the reviewing officer at the reviewing station, does he have sword drawn or in scabbard ?

Answer.—As the brigade commanders are not directed to return swords, they remain drawn while they are by the side of the reviewing officer. [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 1, 1880.]

Reviews of brigades and divisions.

Neither paragraph 826 nor 827, Infantry Tactics, expressly states whether or not the colonels commanding battalions leave their battalions, after passing in review, to take place on the right of the general of brigade. For the colonel to place himself by the side of the brigade commander does not violate any of the principles of as-

simulation of the tactics. Moreover, the presence of the colonel at the reviewing point is desirable, that he may give information in regard to details of his regiment that might not be known to the general commanding the brigade. It is therefore held that, in the review of a brigade of infantry, the colonels commanding battalions should, unaccompanied by their staff, take place on the right of the general commanding the brigade; that in review of a division of infantry the colonels should not leave the head of their battalions after passing the reviewing officer. [General decision, letter, Aug. 28, 1885—5609, A. G. O., 1885.]

Officers joining funeral procession follow in order of rank.

Upon a point raised as to a discrepancy between the wording of paragraph 635 of the Regulations of 1881, and the corresponding paragraph in the Regulations of 1863, the General of the Army decides: "In the matter referred to, paragraph 635 (Codified Regulations) cites Upton's Tactics as well as the Regulations of 1863. These Tactics having been adopted subsequently to the Regulations of 1863, take precedence whenever conflict occurs. Therefore persons joining the procession follow the coffin in *order* of their rank—not in the *inverse*, as was prescribed by the Regulations of 1863. It will be observed that according to the Tactics nothing is reversed at funerals except the arms of the infantry escort and the order in column of the troops when the escort is composed of different arms of service. The old practice of

inversions is gradually falling into disuse." [Letter A. G. O., Feb. 3, 1882.]

CEREMONY OF GUARD-MOUNTING; GUARD DUTY, ETC.

The following is the proper method for officers of the guard to take post at guard-mounting: The officers of the guard take their posts, three yards in front of the centers of their platoons (if but one officer of the guard, three yards in front of the center of the guard), as soon as the sergeant-major has reported, and not wait until he has taken post on the left of the guard.

The sword should be drawn as soon as the officer takes his post, and not until then. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

In regard to the execution of the movement described in the third paragraph of page 364, Infantry (first paragraph on page 440, Cavalry) Tactics, the General of the Army says: "The wording of the Tactics, paragraph 818, describes an oblique movement in the execution of the command '*Officers and non-commissioned officers to the front and center, march,*' at guard-mounting; and to ascertain that the movement is intended to be oblique it is well to consider this command in connection with the similar command for dress parade, paragraph 810, in which the Tactics clearly specify that at the command '*First sergeants to the front and center, march,*' the movement is rectangular. If the same had been contemplated at guard-mounting, the text would have been equally clear and positive in saying so." [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 11, 1882.]

A non-commissioned officer, commanding the guard, when conducting the same from the place of guard-mounting to its post, should march at its left and rear whenever there is no file-closer. [Decision Lieutenant-General, letter April 13, 1885.]

The commanding officers of the old and the new guards should face the front and not each other, in executing the "salute" prescribed in the twelfth line from the top of page 386 of the Artillery Tactics. [Decision of Lieutenant-General, letter April 17, 1885.]

First sergeants at guard-mounting.

The following views of Inspector-General D. B. Sacket, U. S. Army, confirmed by Lieutenant-General Sheridan, have been published by the Adjutant-General of the Army: "I regard the first sergeants and their supernumeraries, the post adjutant and the sergeant-major, as a portion of the guard until the guard has passed the new officer of the day in review. The review over, the above-mentioned persons cease to belong to the guard, and then act as laid down in 'Ceremonies for Guard-Mounting' in the Tactics. Before the review the first sergeants are as much a part of the guard as is the sergeant who marches on guard. Should the sergeant of the guard, while at an 'order arms,' be addressed by the post adjutant, he does not come to a 'carry arms' to make his reply. I think the same rule applies to first sergeants, and that First Sergeant Ward was right in remaining at an 'order arms' while answering the inquiry made by the post adjutant." [Letter A. G. O., Feb., 1885.]

Regan's Manual of Guard Duty.

This work is not an authorized publication of the War Department in the same sense as are the prescribed Regulations and Tactics. [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 11, 1884.]

While a most excellent work for general use, it is not *authority* in the sense in which that term is understood in the military service. [Letter A. G. O., July 14, 1882.]

Sentinel in charge of prisoners.

A sentinel, or a member of a guard, in charge of prisoners either marching or at work, should salute all officers with a sergeant's salute. It is proper, however, in the discretion of the commanding officer, to direct sentinels in charge of prisoners not to render any salute, when such orders are necessary in order that the sentinel may not have his attention diverted from the prisoners under his charge, and that he may be held in a strict accountability for their safe keeping in situations favorable for escape. [Letter A. G. O., Oct. 15, 1884.]

A prisoner under charge of a sentinel should not be required to salute an officer. The sentinel *alone* should salute. [Letter to Commanding General, Department of the East, June 9, 1883.]

A prisoner (enlisted man) not under the immediate charge of a sentinel does not salute; he simply stands attention to all officers.

Acting sergeant-major.

An acting sergeant-major should be recognized as such by other non-commissioned officers, whether junior or not. [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 25, 1884.]

Question.—A sergeant in charge of a detail reporting at guard-mounting to an acting sergeant-major, his junior in rank, should he salute first?

Answer.—The acting sergeant-major should salute first ; the sergeant should return it and then report. [Decision of General Upton.]

Mode of announcing approach of new guard or officer of the day by sentinel in front of the guard-house.

On this point the Lieutenant-General commanding the Army decides as follows :

No. 1 should call out, “ Turn out the guard, body of troops (or armed party),” or “ Officer of the day,” as the case may be. This practice conforms with paragraphs 380 and 386 of the Regulations.

Turning out the guard by the sentinel is in itself a compliment, and should not be omitted. Besides, when the guard is formed, it may be the wish of the officer of the day to pass in rear of it, and not to interrupt the purpose for which it is paraded. This he can accomplish by saluting, or replying, “ Never mind the guard,” in answer to No. 1. [Letter A. G. O., May 10, 1884.]

Mode of challenging by sentinel in front of guard-house.

The sentinel on No. 1 post having challenged any person approaching his post at night and received the reply, should command, “ Halt,” and call “ Corporal of the guard, friend,” or “ friend with the countersign,” according to the answer of the person challenged. The corporal of the guard should then order the person to advance, receiving the countersign, if the person has it.

If the person challenged be the commanding officer, or any person entitled to inspect the guard, the corporal, after receiving the countersign, should say, "The countersign is right," and call, "turn out the guard," announcing the title of the officer challenged. The guard being paraded, the officer of the guard will say, "Advance, commanding officer," (or "officer of the day"), adding "with the countersign" (or "parole"), should he deem it necessary. [Letter A. G. O., April 10, 1884.]

The following points in relation to guard duty, submitted by Colonel R. I. Dodge, U. S. A., were confirmed by General Upton :

"Challenging may begin at any specified hour, ordinarily in garrison it begins at tattoo.

"Between the firing of the evening gun and the hour fixed for challenging, a sentinel does not salute, but stands at a carry faced to his proper front; nor does the guard turn out for any one.

"Daytime, within the meaning of paragraph 386 of the Regulations, is held to be the interval of time between the firing of the morning and evening guns.

"*The officer of the guard* takes post in *front* of his guard in receiving grand rounds.

"After the officer of the day has been saluted by his guard or guards, official recognition of his presence thereafter, while he remains in the same vicinity, will be taken by bringing the guard or guards to attention; this rule is general in regard to saluting officers who remain in the same vicinity."

Compliments by sentinels after challenging.

Standing at attention by a sentinel after the hour for challenging is sufficient compliment to require its recognition (by a salute) from an officer in passing. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

Sentinels allowed to stand on post in hot weather.

“It is customary in very hot weather to permit sentinels to stand at an ‘order’ on their posts, but the principle is observed that the sentinel must take the position (standing) best suited to an effective performance of his duties in the changed condition.” [Letter A. G. O., Sept. 1, 1883.]

Miscellaneous.

“The corporal of the guard should carry his rifle with the bayonet fixed.” [Letter A. G. O., Aug. 17, 1883.]

There is no authority other than “custom of service” for the commander of a body of armed men on passing a guard bringing the arms to a *carry* before saluting. The practice, however, has the sanction of long approved custom and may be considered law. [Circular No. 2, U. S. Infantry and Cavalry School, 1884.]

The following decisions were rendered Jan. 14, 1885, by Lieutenant-General Sheridan in response to inquiries by Col. Fred Phisterer, A. A. G., State of New York:

The salutes prescribed in paragraph 389 of the Regulations are limited to officers who cross a sentinel’s post, or pass within saluting distance in front of him. If an officer pass in rear, and within saluting distance of a

sentinel, the latter will not salute, but face outward and stand to attention.

Saluting distance.

1. Saluting distance is the limit within which individuals and the insignia of rank can be readily recognized. It should not be less than 30 paces.

2. When the officer of the guard and officer of the day approach the guard-house from different directions, at the same time, the officer of the day should be advanced first, and should not be made to wait for his junior.

3. It is the duty of the commanding officer to give the special instructions which the duties of the particular guard concerned require. In the absence of special instructions, the corporal of a relief should decide for himself, according to the urgency of the case, how far he should allow the duties devolving upon a patrol to interfere with the relief of the old sentinels. If the route of the patrol is on a continuous chain of sentinels, he should not challenge persons coming near him, unless he has reason to believe that sentinels are neglecting their duties.

4. A sentinel (not No. 1), after having received the right countersign, should reply, "Advance friend" or "friends," "patrol" or "rounds," as the case may be, in accordance with paragraph 377, Army Regulations.

5. A detachment or company being at a *rest* and commanded by a non-commissioned officer, should be brought to a "carry," and the non-commissioned officer should salute all officers. If commanded by a commissioned officer, the same compliment should be paid to the commanding officer and general officers only.

6. A guard being in line and not under inspection, when commanded by a non-commissioned officer, is brought to *attention* and *carry* when an officer not entitled to have the guard turned out passes, and the non-commissioned officer salutes all officers. If the guard is commanded by a commissioned officer, attention should be paid only to officers entitled to have the guard turned out for them.

Handling the rifle.

The attention of officers is invited to the necessity of instructing the soldier, after loading the rifle, to relinquish all pressure upon the trigger when in bringing the hammer from a full-cock to either the half or safety-cock, or from the half to the safety-cock positions, as soon as the nose of the sear has passed the notch on the tumbler just above the one in which it is desired to engage it. When this precaution is neglected, it has been found possible to so engage the sear-nose on the edge of the tumbler-notches that but a very slight touch upon the trigger, or only a jar of the piece, will be necessary to free it and permit the hammer to fall upon the firing-pin, giving a blow which, while generally not sufficient, may yet, in some cases, explode the cartridge. This peculiarity of the lock is independent of the character of the surface of the sear-nose and ends of the tumbler-notches, and is inherent in the mechanism of all fire-arms in which the pressure on the sear passes through or near its center of motion. The proper remedy can be found only in the careful instruction of the soldier. [Circ. letter, Jan. 6, 1885—4200, A. G. O., 1884.]

Guard mounting and stable guard of a battery.

Orders placing the stable guard of a battery under the orders of the post officer of the day conflict with paragraphs 976 and 1166, Light Artillery Tactics, which, by the approval of the President and promulgation by the Secretary of War, have the force of regulations and must be obeyed.

The stable and park guard of a battery must be mounted by the battery officer of the day, as prescribed in Light Artillery Tactics, paragraph 976.

An order involving the mounting of a battery stable guard by the post adjutant is in conflict with paragraph 1166, Light Artillery Tactics, which declares explicitly that the guard of a light battery shall be under the immediate orders of the battery officer of the day, who reports directly to the battery commander, subject, of course, to the higher authority of the post commander.

An order giving a joint control of the stable guard to the battery commander and the post officer of the day would result in friction and contentions. Military subordination to more than one immediate commander is impracticable, and not warranted by military rules or the customs of the service. [Decision Lieut.-Gen., letter Oct. 5, 1885—5337, A. G. O., 1885.]

Courtesies between commanding officers of sea-coast forts and commanders of foreign ships of war.

Paragraphs 705 and 708 of Colonel Tidball's manual (heavy artillery) seem to have been well considered by both the Navy and War Departments before adoption.

Colonel Tidball's position, that the commanders of our sea-coast forts represent the Government, is, in my judgment, correct, and I hope for that reason, and because of the simple common-sense method that flows from it, his manual will be maintained. [Views Lieut.-Gen., concurred in by Sec. War, letter Nov. 17, 1885—3454, A. G. O., 1885.]

DECISIONS ON POINTS OF TACTICS.

It is almost impossible to devise a system of tactics that will be interpreted alike in all its details by different instructors, and decisions on minor parts can well be left to the commander of the regiment, battalion or independent company, without violation of that "uniformity throughout the Army," prescribed by General Orders No. 6, Headquarters of the Army, July 17, 1873, the main object being the accomplishment of an authorized maneuver without the violation of any principle or any express direction of the Tactics. [Decision of Lieut.-Gen., letter June 24, 1885—2780, A. G. O., 1885.]

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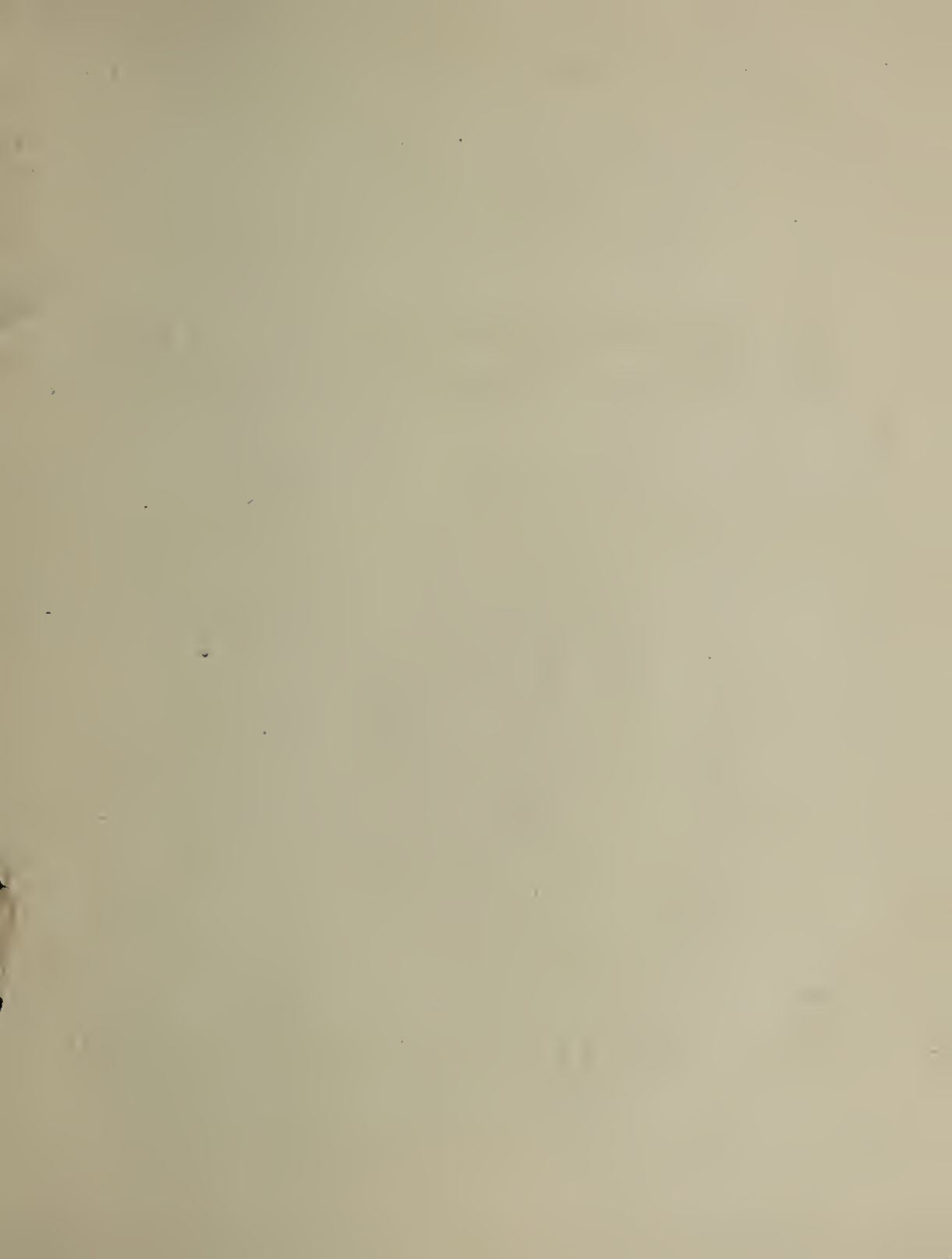
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